Amendment to the Claims

1. (currently amended) An interface device for a computer, the interface device comprising:

hardware configured to process a transport layer header of a packet received via a first network port,

a memory adapted to store ~~control information defining a transport layer~~ a TCP connection established by the computer and handled by said device, and

a mechanism for associating said packet with said control information ~~and~~ to send data from said packet via a second network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

2. (original) The interface device of claim 1, further comprising a SCSI controller connectable to the storage unit.

3. (previously presented) The interface device of claim 1, wherein said first network port is connected to a first network and said second network port is connected to a second network.

4. (original) The interface device of claim 1, further comprising a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit.

5. (original) The network interface device of claim 1, further comprising a RAID controller connectable to the storage unit.

6. (original) The network interface device of claim 1, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data.

7. (original) The network interface device of claim 1, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data under control of a file system in the computer.

8 – 20 (canceled)

21. (currently amended) An interface device for a computer, the interface device comprising:

a receive mechanism that processes a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header of a network packet,

a memory storing ~~a combination of information describing~~ an established TCP connection that can migrate to and from the computer, and

a processing mechanism that associates said packet with said information to send data from said packet via a network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

22. (previously presented) The interface device of claim 21, further comprising a SCSI controller connectable to the storage unit.

23. (previously presented) The interface device of claim 21, further comprising a plurality of network ports.

24. (previously presented) The interface device of claim 21, further comprising a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit.

25. (previously presented) The network interface device of claim 21, further comprising a RAID controller connectable to the storage unit.

26. (previously presented) The network interface device of claim 21, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data.

27. (previously presented) The network interface device of claim 21, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data under control of a file system in the computer.

28. (previously presented) A method for operating an interface device for a computer, the interface device connectable to a network and a storage unit, the method comprising:

receiving, by the interface device from the network, a packet containing data and a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header,

processing, by the interface device, the TCP header,

storing, on the interface device, a TCP connection that can migrate to and from the computer,

associating, by the interface device, the packet with the TCP connection, and

sending, by the interface device, the data from the packet to the storage unit via a network port, thereby avoiding the computer.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising creating, by the computer, information regarding the TCP connection.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the packet is received via the port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the port.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the interface device includes first and second network ports, and the packet is received via the first port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the second port.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising storing the data on a file cache of the interface device.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising adding a network protocol header to the data for sending the data to the storage unit.